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in the Salt Negotiations

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SCARP wars

HOW KISSINGER USED INTELLIGENCE IN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS

Donald E. Welzenbach

One of the more disputatious and publicly documented periods in the Agency's history encompassed the years 1969 through 1973 when President Richard M. Nixon and his Special Adviser on National Security, Henry A. Kissinger, were pursuing an agreement with the Soviet Union on limiting strategic arms.¹ Kissinger, in his book *White House Years*, wrote: "[Nixon] felt it imperative to exclude the CIA from the formulation of policy; it was staffed by Ivy League liberals who behind the facade of analytical objectivity were usually pushing their own preferences. They had always opposed him politically."² In fact, Nixon and Kissinger did attempt to exclude CIA experts working for DCI Richard M. Helms from the SALT deliberations, but discovered they could not really get along without them. Kissinger was successful in circumscribing most Directorate of Intelligence inputs to the process, but realized that he needed the technical intelligence being produced by the Directorate of Science and Technology.

Duckett Takes Charge

Carl Duckett became DDS&T in September 1966. Unlike his predecessors, Herbert Scoville, Jr. and Albert D. Wheelon, Duckett was neither scholar nor engineer. Instead, he was a unique combination of salesman and politician with an encyclopedic memory. He believed in lighting candles, not hiding them. As DDS&T, Duckett was in a unique position to make major contributions to any discussions about the Soviet missile threat. Before coming to the Agency in late 1963 to organize the Foreign Missile and Space Activity Center (FMSAC), Duckett had been the US Army's missile intelligence chief at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. In the early 1950s, Duckett had worked at the White Sands, New Mexico, missile-testing range where he obtained first-hand knowledge of the use of telemetry and range instrumentation in testing US missiles. In November 1957, CIA called upon Duckett's unique "hands-on" experience with missile testing to help unravel the mysteries contained in the first U-2 photography of the Soviet Union's Tyuratam Missile Test Range.

Thus, for more than 15 years, Duckett had been closely associated with all types of missiles—defensive, offensive, and strategic—and by the late 1960s he

¹ These negotiations have been the subject of many books—including John Newhouse's *Cold Dawn—The Story of SALT*; Gerard C. Smith's *Doubletalk: The Story of the First Strategic Arms Limitation Talks*; John Prados' *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength*; Lawrence Freedman's *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*; as well as a chapter in Thomas Powers' *The Man Who Kept the Secrets, Richard Helms and the CIA* and John Ranelagh's *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA*. Each discusses the dispute over National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) 11-8-68 and the assessment of the large Soviet missile known as the SS-9 or SCARP.

² Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years, 1969-1973*, Boston, Little, Brown, 1979, p. 11.

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considered himself the Agency's, if not the nation's, No. 1 missile analyst. His successor as DDS&T, Leslie C. Dirks, referred to him as having been the nation's "technical intelligence czar."³

Duckett's expertise was enhanced by his position in the bureaucracy. When DCI John A. McCone made Duckett head of FMSAC he also appointed him to be chairman of the Guided Missiles and Astronautics Intelligence Committee (GMAIC, now known as the Weapons and Space Systems Intelligence Committee or WSSIC) of the US Intelligence Board (USIB), which McCone also headed. The GMAIC position put Duckett at the top of the nation's missile-intelligence pyramid. All members of the intelligence community sent representatives to the GMAIC and, because it was an official arm of the USIB (predecessor of today's National Foreign Intelligence Board or NFIB), they were guided by its decisions. Once he became DDS&T, Duckett had at his beck and call on the FMSAC staff and in OSI's Defensive Systems and Science and Technology divisions the most astute group of missile intelligence experts in the nation. These were analysts he, as the founding director of FMSAC, had helped hire. FMSAC was responsible for analyzing and reporting on the technical and operational "characteristics" of Soviet missiles. OSI had the experts on Soviet land- and sea-based defensive missiles.

In 1969, the Agency unit responsible for monitoring and reporting on Soviet strategic missile "force levels" was the Office of Strategic Research (OSR), created in early 1967 by Deputy Director for Intelligence R. Jack Smith. This new office, headed by Bruce C. Clarke, Jr., brought together the military intelligence units from the DI's Offices of Current Intelligence and Research and Reports. Its mission was to determine the numbers of Soviet strategic weapons, including missiles, and to analyze the "military doctrine" controlling their use. DI analysts working on the Soviet strategic missile threat depended on DS&T and its missile analysts for much of the raw data as well as finished intelligence on Soviet missile systems.

One result of having two directorates contribute analytical inputs to the NIEs was that DS&T analysts resented having their "finished" intelligence report further "analyzed" by the DI's OSR and ~~ONE ADMITTEDLY~~ the difference between the two types of analysis

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From his position as DDS&T, Duckett had thrust himself and his directorate to the forefront in the various discussions of Soviet missile systems. When new pieces of intelligence about Soviet capabilities became available, he was quick to bring them to the attention of those decision-makers who could put them to some use, be they on Capitol Hill or the Pentagon. He strongly believed that CIA had to "sell" its intelligence product if it hoped to have any influence in the corridors of power. Duckett was also keenly alert to the fact that Agency influence on Capitol Hill meant money for CIA's technical-collection programs, which were located in his directorate and were very

³ Interview with Leslie C. Dirks, 17 July 1986.

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expensive. Duckett seized every opportunity to provide briefings where he thought they would be helpful. As a result, FMSAC and Defensive Systems Division analysts also briefed NASA's management, the Vice President's Space Council, the director of the Bureau of the Budget, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's General Advisory Committee, and the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB).⁴

Beginnings of SALT During Johnson Administration

In March 1968, Duckett had been asked by General Jack Davis of the Department of State what methods this nation could use to determine which missiles the Soviet Union was deploying in SS-4 silos. It must be pointed out that General Davis' inquiry was directed to Duckett and the DS&T and not to the Office of Strategic Research in the Directorate of Intelligence, because the DS&T not only possessed missile analysts, but also was one of two major government units responsible for developing collection systems for gathering data on the Soviet threat. At the time, General Davis was preparing a paper on the subject of strategic armaments for Secretary of State Dean Rusk. In his reply, Duckett expressed reservations about this nation's ability to detect the conversion of intermediate-range and medium-range missile silos for use by intercontinental ballistic missiles. He also commented on the absence of a US capability for determining the technical differences between several Soviet antiballistic missile (ABM) systems.⁵

Ten weeks later, in May 1968, Duckett began devoting more attention to the political aspects of the weapons race between the Soviet Union and the United States, something that was definitely not within the DS&T charter. This change in direction was brought about partly by Dr. Ruben Mettler, president of TRW Corporation and the new chairman of the Agency's Strategic Intelligence Panel. In the spring of 1968, Dr. Mettler suggested reorienting his panel's membership from its emphasis on technical aspects of strategic weapons to the political aspects. Although Duckett feared that such a reorientation might be seen by the Board of National Estimates as an intrusion into its area of competence, he appreciated Mettler's concern that scientists become involved in the issue of compliance verification.⁶

Indeed, Duckett's involvement in the strategic-political arena was to become so intense in the early 1970s that his intentions became suspect among high-ranking officials of the Directorate of Intelligence who felt he was usurping their prerogatives. Despite this, Duckett served as adviser to Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's national security affairs chief, and became the conduit for CIA inputs on the strategic balance.

Duckett Meets Kissinger

Duckett's ability to work with Kissinger, who shared the Nixon administration's distrust of the established bureaucracy, was all the more remarkable

⁴ Interview with David Brandwein, 9 April 1987.

⁵ C.E. Duckett memo for General Jack Davis for use in briefing Secretary of State Dean Rusk, 12 Mar 68; Duckett's Chrono File.

⁶ 20 May 1968 Duckett note to Lauderdale; Duckett's Chrono File.

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considering that their relationship got off to a bad start in late November 1968 when DCI Richard Helms refused a request by Kissinger for a special briefing on both the Soviet and US strategic weapons issue. At the time, President-elect Nixon was operating from his transitional office in New York's Hotel Pierre and Kissinger was hoping for a one-on-one briefing. He did not want a phalanx of briefers with easels and pointers arriving at the Pierre. Helms refused to allow a CIA official do both briefings because he did not think it appropriate for one of his employees to speak for the Pentagon and the US strategic deterrent. Helms did permit DDS&T Carl Duckett and OSR Director Bruce Clarke to go to New York and brief on the Soviet threat.

The briefing on the US strategic deterrent, given by an Air Force brigadier general from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, did not go well and Duckett was alert to Kissinger's dissatisfaction with the effort. In fact, Duckett interjected himself into the briefing when the Air Force general misstated the circular-error probability (CEP) of the US Minuteman missile. Duckett's contribution to the briefing impressed Kissinger but added to Kissinger's feeling of having been snubbed by Helms' refusal to have CIA give the entire briefing. It was late January 1969 before the national security adviser sought another briefing by Duckett. By this time, Kissinger was beginning to realize that the Agency, with Duckett as its spokesman, was more knowledgeable on the subject of Soviet strategic missiles than other government components.⁷

It should be understood that DCI Helms routinely deferred to the incumbent DDS&T on technical matters. For example, both Duckett and Donald Chamberlain, the Director of Scientific Intelligence, accompanied Helms to Capitol Hill when he gave his annual briefing to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Duckett and Chamberlain would answer the detailed questions concerning missiles, space, and nuclear energy.⁸ Duckett became a familiar figure before congressional panels and established a close working relationship with Senators Henry M. Jackson of Washington, John Tower of Texas, and Sam Nunn of Georgia.

Dispute Over NIE 11-8-68

On 20 January 1969, the day of President Nixon's inauguration, Soviet spokesman Leonid Zamyatin reaffirmed his country's willingness for a "serious exchange of views" on the subject of arms limitation. The Soviet Union apparently did not want the strategic arms limitation effort, begun under President Johnson, to falter. One result of Zamyatin's remarks was that National Security Adviser Kissinger's involvement in the arms limitation arena began in high gear. In fact, the next day, 21 January 1969, he issued seven National Security Study Memorandums (NSSMs), the third of which was titled "Military Posture" and dealt with the question of sufficiency of strategic hardware.

At the center of the stormy period set in motion by the strategic arms limitation effort was the question of the Soviet ICBM known as the SS-9, mod-4

⁷ Duckett interview.

⁸ Duckett interview.

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triplet, or SCARP (b)(1) (b)(3)(c)	(b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
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NIE 11-8-68, issued in early October 1968, reflected this new conclusion that the SS-9 had three reentry vehicles but was not MIRVed. The NIE did concede that the Soviet Union was at work on MIRV systems. This conclusion was acceptable to the Johnson administration's Pentagon, headed by Defense Secretary Clark Clifford, because it removed the need to embark on a more sophisticated anti-ballistic missile (ABM) effort. However, the NIE was promptly challenged by the incoming Nixon administration, the new Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, and Henry Kissinger. According to John Prados, who has written extensively of this period in his book *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength*: "The spring of 1969 should be seen as a major postwar watershed of nuclear strategic doctrine."⁹

FMSAC's stable of analysts included three men who had worked with Duckett at Huntsville—[redacted] (b)(3)(c) and M. Corley Wonus. David S. Brandwein, Duckett's successor as Director of FMSAC, believed that [redacted] new more about the SS-9 than anyone else in the United States and that [redacted] was the finest trajectory analyst in the country.¹⁰ The Huntsville three and other FMSAC analysts [redacted] (b)(3)(c) and R. Evans Hineman were convinced that the results of the four known Soviet tests of the SS-9 triplet, as it was called, could not be used to prove that the missile's warheads were independently targeted.

Analysis of the SS-9 done for the Pentagon's Directorate of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E) was accomplished [redacted]

(b)(1) (b)(3)(c)	(b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
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⁹ John Prados, *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength*, Dial Press, New York, 1982.

[redacted] (b)(3)(c) [redacted]	(b)(1) [redacted]
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The DDR&E seize(b)(1) conclusions and began postulating that what the Soviets had in r(b)(3)(c)making the SS-9 mod-4 into a MIRV. Richard Latter, a Rand Corporation employee serving as an adviser to DDR&E John Foster and working closely with Paul Nitze, became a vociferous advocate of this view.

David Brandwein, FMSAC Chief had wor(b)(1)th from 1960 to 1963 when both were employed by STL. Brandv(b)(3)(c)e u(b)(1)th for doing the analysis, and with Latter for allowing his poli(b)(3)(c)or his conclusions about the SS-9.¹² Other FMSAC analysts, suc(b)(1) believed(b)(1) was "only doing the job he had(b)(3)(c)id to do"—explainin(b)(3)(c)viet missile designers could make the SS-9 into a MIRV. Like their Pentagon counterparts (b)(3)(c) (b)(1)d basic research as well as data from sources other than telemet(b)(3)(c)ulating their appraisals of the SCARP's capabilities.¹³

In the opening weeks of the Nixon presidency, all intelligence units came under pressure to reconsider NIE 11-8-68 and to change the assessment of the SS-9 SCARP. Particularly, Laird and Kissinger wanted CIA to revert to its earlier assessment that the SS-9 might possibly be MIRVed.

On 13 March 1969, Kissinger issued National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) No. 28 requesting a formal interagency study on "SALT Criteria." At the same time, he asked CIA to state the verifiability of each weapon limitation proposed in NSSM-28. Work on verification had been going on within the Agency since early 1968 involving FMSAC's Brandwein and OSR's Robert Hewitt and R.M. Huffstutler. By late March 1969, verification had become the hub around which the planning for the SALT effort would revolve and Carl Duckett was embarked on a long-term and close association with Kissinger that involved educating Nixon's assistant for national security affairs in the intricacies of estimating the Soviet strategic missile threat. Before the year was out, Henry Kissinger would be referring to Carl Duckett as the "professor."¹⁴

In early April 1969, Kissinger set up his own MIRV panel with its own interagency working group.¹⁵ Later, in June, Kissinger established several interagency *ad hoc* committees to examine the verifiability of potential arms-control provisions. FMSAC's David Brandwein chaired the *ad hoc* committee on offensive missile systems. Another *ad hoc* committee examined defensive missiles.¹⁶

Early in 1969, CIA's analysis of the Soviet SS-9 mod-4 triplet left no one happy in the Pentagon or the White House. Defense Secretary Laird insisted that the three warheads on the mod-4 SCARP were the "functional equivalent" of MIRVs and as such could overwhelm the US Minuteman offensive shield.

¹² Brandwein 22 Jul 86 interview.

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B(b)(3)(C) Jul 86 and Duckett interviews.

¹⁵ Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, p. 161.

¹⁶ Brandwein 8 Apr 87 interview.

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Kissinger took the position that the SCARP's triplet "footprint" was designed to match the placement of missiles in the Minuteman launch complex. He hoped thereby to prove that the Minuteman shield was threatened by the Soviets. Kissinger needed this "credible threat" in order to justify redirecting an ABM system, known as Sentinel, from defending cities to defending Minuteman complexes. He wanted to use this as a bargaining chip in the forthcoming SALT negotiations. In fact, President Nixon announced on 14 March 1969 his decision to proceed with the phased deployment of an ABM system, later renamed Safeguard, around Minuteman sites.

The question of the strategic threat posed by the SCARP missile was the subject of a 24 March 1969 telephone request from General Maxwell Taylor, a member of President Nixon's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), to John Bross, the deputy to the DCI for National Intelligence Programs Evaluation (NIPE).

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The Agency's appraisal of the SCARP triplet, as included in NIE 11-8-68, was the subject of testimony by DCI Helms and DDS&T Duckett during a closed Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on 17 May 1969. They presented essentially the same arguments contained in the 25 March memorandum for General Taylor: that the SCARP triplet was an MRV whose three-warhead footprint had a circular-error probability (CEP) too large to pose a threat to the Minuteman complexes. The NIE did not consider the SCARP triplet as giving the Soviets a "first strike" capability. According to Powers' book, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*:

At the end of the [17 May] session [Senator J. William] Fulbright observed that "It sure didn't sound like what the Secretary of Defense has been saying." Kissinger was furious. NSC staffers wondered whether Helms could survive as DCI, and one of them said that if it were not for Helms' reputation for integrity on the Hill, Kissinger would have insisted that Nixon fire him.¹⁸

On Tuesday, 27 May, Duckett asked Brandwein to prepare a comparison of the differences between the Agency and the Pentagon's DDR&E estimates of the SS-9. Duckett also suggested that Brandwein present the two arguments side-by-side, at equal length, on the same piece of paper. Both Duckett and Abbott Smith, Board of National Estimates chairman, approved of Brandwein's paper and OSR's Bruce Clarke agreed to present it to the NSSM-28 steering committee meeting the next day. That meeting, attended by Deputy Defense Secretary Packard, was less than successful, because Packard was disappointed that Brandwein's paper did not show more agreement between the two sides—the Pentagon and CIA.

DCI Helms, accompanied by Carl Duckett, BNE Chairman Abbott Smith, DDI R. Jack Smith, and ONE's [] (b)(3)(c) met with Kissinger and David

¹⁷ John Bross Memo for Executive Secretary, PFIAB, 25 Mar 69; Duckett Chrono File.

¹⁸ Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets, Richard Helms and the CIA*, New York, Pocket Books, Inc., 1979, p. 269.

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Packard on 29 May at the White House. Kissinger related his and the President's dissatisfaction with the estimate and demanded it be rewritten and that CIA's position regarding the SCARP include more supporting evidence. The DCI assured Kissinger that CIA wanted to respond to the needs of the President and said that Duckett and Abbott Smith would work on the problem.

That same afternoon, Brandwein attended a meeting in the Pentagon of the DIA's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) chaired by Eugene Fubini. Brandwein told the group that the Agency did not "disagree violently" with the DIA/DDR&E report on the SS-9 but felt "the tone was wrong, that they were coming down too hard on the idea that SS-9 had to be a MIRV even though there were no plausible explanations." SAB member Richard Latter attacked Brandwein's position by harping on his own estimation that the SS-9 was more accurate than the Agency paper said it was.

Memorial Day 1969: Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68

On Memorial Day 1969, Duckett, Brandwein, and Clarke met in the Pentagon with Gardner Tucker, Roland Herbst, and Ronald Easley of the DDR&E and [redacted] of DIA. They worked out several drafts with surprisingly little controversy. Clarke, Duckett, and Tucker took the drafts to the Executive Office Building for a meeting with Henry Kissinger, David Packard, and Abbott Smith that afternoon. Kissinger was still not pleased, but by late afternoon general agreement was reached on a new plan for preparing estimates that would give producing officers a greater role in their drafting.¹⁹

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On Thursday, 5 June, the SS-9 debate took a turn for the worse when DDR&E Foster, using erroneous RIVET AMBER radar data collected during a recent SS-9 test in the Pacific, told Defense Secretary Melvin Laird that the SCARP's three warheads had landed in a straight line "proving" that they were MIRVs. Foster could not be dissuaded from this view, even though later analysis of the RIVET AMBER data revealed that the warheads had landed in the typical random triangular configuration. Brandwein learned of this flap from DIA's [redacted] who telephoned to assure him that DIA was not responsible for giving Foster the faulty data.²⁰

A Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68 was drafted during the first 10 days of June and approved for distribution by the US Intelligence Board on Thursday, 12 June. The next morning, Duckett accompanied the DDCI, Lieutenant General Robert E. Cushman, Jr., (USMC), to the White House where Kissinger expressed his continuing dissatisfaction with the wording of the document. Again on Saturday, 14 June, General Cushman led a CIA delegation, which included Duckett, Brandwein, Abbott Smith, and R. Jack Smith, to the White House. Also present for this meeting were Deputy Defense Secretary

¹⁹ Brandwein 22 Jul 86, Duckett interviews.

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Packard, Gardner Tucker and Thomas Burke from the Defense Department, Philip Farley from ACDA, and Attorney General John Mitchell, as well as Henry Kissinger and members of his NSC staff.²¹

The purpose of the gathering was to review the recent Special Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68. According to Brandwein, Kissinger "made it pretty plain he was unhappy with it and kept saying he did not want to influence our judgments." For three hours, Kissinger repeated that his "most important client" wanted the facts separated from the judgments and identified as such. He said the memorandum was negative where it did not need to be negative. Privately, Brandwein agreed with Kissinger's criticism and blamed the problem on the document's drafters. Deputy Defense Secretary Packard also came to the meeting with a lengthy rebuttal of a number of points in the memorandum. Packard was not aware that Abbot Smith could not agree to changes in the memorandum without the approval of the USIB. The meeting ended with CIA committed to reorganizing and redrafting the document.²²

On Monday, 16 June, Abbott Smith informed all holders of the memorandum that it would be editorially revised to provide more discussion nro and con on the MIRV/MRV question. Brandwein, [redacted] (b)(3)(c)
 (b)(3)(c)pent much of that day rewriting parts of Abbott Smith's new draft, specifically the parts dealing with the possibility that the SS-9 might be MIRVed and also addressing its range. This revision, while making the NIE longer, did not essentially change the original estimate that the SS-9 mod-4 did not present a "first strike" capability, but left vague its threat to the Minuteman force.

Despite Agency rewrites of the estimate, Kissinger was still not satisfied. He called another meeting at the White House for Thursday, 19 June. Duckett and Brandwein attended for the Agency. When they reached the White House Situation Room, they discovered a large delegation, with Kissinger in the chair, and including his NSC chief of staff Laurence E. Lynn, Jr.; Helmut Sonnenfeldt and Alexander Haig of the EOB staff; Maj. Joseph Eibling and Roland Herbst of the DDR&E; Spurgeon Keeny and Philip Farley of ACDA; as well as Frank Perez from State. Kissinger wanted the group to consider the consequences of a MIRV test ban on both the United States and the Soviet Union and sought answers to such questions as: Which side would profit? Could either side deploy without further testing? How could we verify? What kind of a ban could be stipulated?²³

On this occasion there was not much wrangling. It was agreed that State's Perez would preside over drafting a paper on this subject with DDR&E contributing the section on the consequences of such a ban on the United States and CIA covering the same topic for the Soviet Union. Duckett assigned Brandwein the task of writing the Agency's contribution to be ready by

²¹ Brandwein 22 Jul 86 interview.

²² Brandwein 22 Jul 86 interview.

²³ Brandwein 22 Jul 86 interview.

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Monday, 23 June. The next afternoon, Friday, 20 June, Brandwein went to ACDA for a meeting with Perez, Herbst, Eibling, and Sidney N. Graybeal to work on the draft.

Monday, 23 June 1969 was an especially busy day for CIA officials. DCI Helms was on Capitol Hill with Defense Secretary Laird testifying before Senator J. William Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee in the morning. At the same time, DDCI Cushman was chairing a special USIB meeting to review the second revision of the Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68. Duckett and Brandwein attended this long USIB meeting which ultimately approved the document essentially as CIA had prepared it.

The next afternoon, Tuesday, 24 June, Duckett accompanied DDCI Cushman to a PFIAB meeting at 1530. A half-hour later, Duckett and Brandwein left the Executive Office Building and walked to the White House Situation Room for another meeting with Kissinger. Most of those who had been present the previous Friday were gathered around Kissinger. The National Security Adviser was not delighted with the MIRV paper prepared by State's Frank Perez, and told Perez to rework the paper.

During the discussion of the paper, Kissinger became annoyed with Brandwein who made a "bureaucratic" objection to allowing the DDR&E to append footnotes to intelligence judgments. Brandwein pointed out the DDR&E had no charter to produce intelligence. Also, Kissinger had read the second revision of the Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68 and said he did not think it was much better than the first. He pointedly asked Brandwein why the Agency resisted putting a MIRV label on the SS-9 mod-4.²⁴

The SCARP SS-9 was the topic of another briefing on Wednesday, 25 June, of the President's Scientific Advisory Committee. Brandwein defended the Agency's analysis. Attending the meeting, chaired by Joseph G. Hirschberg, were former DDS&T Albert Wheelon, Sidney Drell, Wolfgang Panofsky, Hans Bethe, R.W. Fink, E.D. Mitchell, Richard Latter, and PSAC Secretary Donald Steininger. Brandwein spoke on the SS-9's accuracy, range, and whether or not it was MIRVed. He failed to convince Latter, who took the floor and tried to prove that his own calculations proved SS-9 accuracy had improved. Later in the year, DDS&T Duckett, in a note to DCI Helms, described Latter as "one of the most vocal critics of this Agency in the scientific community."²⁵

The MIRV paper never completely satisfied Kissinger who resorted to his own MRV/MIRV Panel to try to resolve the SCARP triplet issue. The differences between the MRV and MIRV arguments were complex and involved numerous briefings by Duckett before Kissinger's suspicions about CIA's analysis could be assuaged. In these sessions, Duckett had to overcome Kissinger's ignorance regarding the role played by telemetry in the analytical

²⁴ Brandwein 22 Jul 86 interview.

²⁵ Note to DCI, subject "Richard Latter" dated 6 Nov 69, OWI Substantive Policy File, Folder 8, Box 10 of 12, 79-B-01272A.

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Kissinger's Verification Panel

While Brandwein was trying to defend the Agency's SS-9 analysis before a PSAC panel in the Executive Office Building on 25 June, DCI Helms and DDS&T Duckett were attending an NSC meeting across the lawn in the White House. Kissinger had arranged this meeting so that the nine SALT options contained in NSSM-28 could be presented to President Nixon by the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.²⁷ During this session, Duckett explained to the gathering how the various SALT proposals could be verified without much difficulty. JCS Chairman General Earle Wheeler thought CIA's treatment of the verification question was much too positive. According to John Newhouse in *Cold Dawn*, General Wheeler made "an unusually harsh statement in which he expressed 'serious doubt' about the quality of the study's treatment of verification problems."²⁸ ACDA Director Gerard C. Smith suggested in a 30 June note to Kissinger that "a higher level verification review panel" be created to study the issue.

Kissinger's senior SALT staff assistant, Laurence Lynn, urged that Gerard Smith's suggestion for a verification unit be implemented and, on 21 July 1969, a formal Verification Panel was established to report to the National Security Council's SALT Working Group on the verifiability of the various SALT proposals. This panel, chaired by Kissinger and comprised of the Attorney General, the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Defense Secretary, the Director of ACDA, the DCI, and a representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met the next day, 22 July 1969. The more detailed work for this panel was to be handled by a Verification Working Group, originally under Lynn's chairmanship, comprised of membership from the same agencies.

Almost simultaneous with this development, Duckett was called to the DCI's office and told by Helms that Kissinger had confided to the DCI that he did not want to deal with OSR's Bruce Clarke on SALT issues because of a personality conflict. In light of this, Helms said he wanted Duckett to be CIA's contact with the White House on SALT matters and serve on the Verification Working Group.²⁹

This arrangement was significant in several respects. First, it removed the Intelligence Directorate from the CIA-NSC loop and thus kept CIA's political evaluations of the Soviet strategic threat from being presented directly to Kissinger. Regardless of whether there was a real personality conflict between Clarke and Kissinger, this move on the part of the national security adviser was in keeping with his philosophy expressed in a 1966 essay: "Bureaucracy becomes an obstacle when what it defines as routine does not address the most significant range of issues or when its prescribed mode of action proves

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²⁷ Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 148.²⁸ Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, p. 162.²⁹ Duckett, Brandwein interviews.**SECRET****43**

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irrelevant to the problem.”³⁰ Kissinger wanted to draw his own political conclusions and adopted a “divide and rule” tactic to atomize the bureaucracy.³¹

Second, by replacing Clarke, the politico-military analyst, with Duckett, the technical analyst, an element of contention was removed. Duckett, an expert on missiles and verification, chose not to get involved in the political ramifications of the issue. Probably more important, Duckett’s substitution for Clarke gave DCI Helms a “friend in court” with whom Kissinger felt comfortable. For sure, it moved this important advisory function out of the DI and into the DS&T.

After several meetings, it became apparent to Working Group members that the resident expert was Carl Duckett who had at his disposal the formidable resources of FMSAC and OSI. By the autumn of 1969, Duckett had become the unofficial chairman of this body. For the next three years, Duckett would spend almost half of his working hours on aspects of SALT.

This development also revealed how Kissinger’s strategy had begun to move into the realm of the practical realities of verification. The Verification Panel and its Working Group, according to Newhouse, “immediately took charge of all analytical work on SALT, a function it . . . never relinquished.”³² Kissinger needed expert advice on missiles and their potential for destruction, and he also needed someone who could advise him on what systems were available for verifying compliance with any agreements arrived at as a result of the SALT negotiations. Duckett was the man of the hour in this regard. The significance of this verification apparatus has been pointed out by John P. Leacacos, in an article in *Foreign Policy*, titled “Kissinger’s Apparatus”:

One major exception to this general failure [of intelligence] stands out. The single field in which an “agreed factual basis” for policy formulation has been more or less achieved has been SALT. Kissinger claims “The Verification Panel has made 98 percent of intelligence disagreements disappear.” The reason: policymakers and intelligence analysts sit on the same panel and directly argue out their differences over facts and policies.³³

SALT Talks Open in Helsinki

When the SALT talks began in Helsinki, Finland on Monday, 17 November 1969,

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(b)(3)(c) Connected with this first session of talks was a press leak. The US

³⁰ Henry Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969, p. 18.

³¹ Lawrence Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 2d edit., Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1977, 1986, p.48.

³² Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, p. 162.

³³ John P. Leacacos, “Kissinger’s Apparatus,” *Foreign Policy*, 5 (Winter 1975) p. 19.

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talking points for the Helsinki meetings were determined at a National Security Council meeting on Friday, 14 November. The points were enumerated in a *New York Times* article by John W. Finney the following Monday, 17 November.

One result of this "flap" was a presidential decree that only "principals" could attend subsequent National Security Council meetings. Participants could no longer bring with them their "backbench" advisers who heretofore had filled the room to capacity. The exception to the President's ruling, however, was CIA. President Nixon and Kissinger both told DCI Helms that he was to bring DDS&T Duckett to all NSC meetings in order to provide expert advice on the SALT issue.³⁴ Duckett continued to attend NSC meetings through the signing of the SALT-I agreement.

The opening round of talks adjourned on 22 December to resume again on 16 April 1970. Within a week of adjournment, a Kissinger memo to members of the Verification Panel outlined a number of tasks to be completed by the Working Group in time for a full Verification Panel meeting the second week of January 1970. The final results were to be reported to an NSC meeting by early March 1970.³⁵

This NSC meeting, which Duckett attended, actually took place on 25 March 1970; following it President Nixon issued NSDM No. 49. In response to this directive, DCI Helms specified that the Verification Working Group should prepare four options for the President's final review and decision concerning the US position at the resumption of the SALT talks in Vienna.³⁶

The first option submitted by the Verification Working Group was the "limited" approach, which would limit the number of offensive missiles and permit a Safeguard-level of ABMs—sufficient ABMs to protect the National Command Authority (NCA) plus the 100 Soviet GALOSH ABMs then in place around Moscow—as well as MIRVs. The second option would allow MIRVs but with zero-level ABMs—only enough ABMs to protect the NCA but not the Moscow system. Option three was the same as two but would ban MIRVs. Option four provided for a phased reduction of offensive missiles but permitted the use of MIRVs by both nations.³⁷

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³⁴ Brandwein 22 Jul 86, Duckett interviews.

³⁵ H.A. Kissinger Memo for the Members of the Verification Panel, Subj: "Preparations for Next Round of SALT," 30 Dec 69, Exec Registry 69-6304; Duckett Chrono File.

³⁶ Attachment to Memo for DDCI from C.E. Duckett "PFIAB Discussions on SALT Talk Items" 2 Apr 70; Duckett Chrono File.

³⁷ Attachment to Memo for DDCI from C.E. Duckett "PFIAB Discussions on SALT Talk Items" 2 Apr 70; Duckett Chrono File.

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Following a 6 April 1970 Verification Panel meeting, Duckett returned to Langley and drafted a memo to DCI Helms. (b)(3)(c) (b)(3)(c) He sent the paper to Helms on Tuesday, 7 April and went over its contents with the DCI that evening in preparation for a National Security Council meeting the following morning, 8 April, which both men would attend. Duckett's paper summarized "what the CIA people most closely involved with arms control matters considered to be the principal conclusions to emerge from the exercise." He said that, in gross terms, the United States "is probably as close to effective parity and a stable strategic relationship with the USSR as it can ever be." Because of this, the prospects for a satisfactory SALT agreement "are probably as good as they will get for the foreseeable future." The most serious visible obstacle to an agreement, said Duckett, "is the negative attitude of the military planners and some of the technical people in Washington (and probably in Moscow as well) to even the most limited agreement." He said that achievement of an acceptable agreement is likely to depend "on the President's willingness to forgo nationwide ABM deployment and settle for zero or NCA-level defenses." The difference between the zero and NCA levels would be 100 ABM launchers, 64 of which the Soviets already had in place around Moscow. Duckett said CIA analysts had no strong views regarding the question of banning MIRVed weapons but favored a tactic of not offering a MIRV ban and supporting an agreement which did not have such a ban. In summary, Duckett listed the following points as most important:

1. The US should try hard to get an agreement on SALT.
2. ABM is the most critical issue and a large, nationwide ABM will probably make agreement impossible.

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3. The administration has made a great effort to get ABM approved; thus, it could make considerable political hay by "giving up ABM for SALT."
4. The US should proceed with MIRV, arguing that our MIRVs are strictly to insure penetration of any Soviet defense and not to increase our destruction capability.
5. For openers we should try for a rather simple agreement but have a long-term goal extending to much more comprehensive arrangements.³⁹

Duckett Tries to Silence Richard Latter

On Thursday, 9 April, the day after the NSC meeting, Duckett decided he would try to overcome some of the Pentagon's "negative attitude" concerning the MIRV issue. He arranged for some of the more vocal critics to gather in his sixth floor conference room to discuss the topic. Attending were Roger Moore and Harry Thompkins from TRW, Richard Latter from Rand Corporation, Roland Herbst of the DDR&E, and David Brandwein and several members of FMSAC's staff. Duckett later referred to this gathering as a "shoot out", because his CIA experts challenged Latter's statistical criteria for judging the SS-9 triplet accurate enough to threaten the Minuteman missile complexes. Although Latter was not completely silenced, his role in the debate lessened noticeably.

The MIRV question was never shelved. The SS-9 mod-4 came up again in mid-August 1970 when Kissinger sent a memorandum to Duckett posing 12 questions about the Agency's analysis of the SS-9 MRV separation times. Evan Hineman prepared the reply for Duckett's signature. The reply explained the basis for the analysis and restated the Agency's conviction that the three warheads on the SS-9 were deployed randomly by sliding from rails at the front of the missile and were not individually aimed or controllable.⁴⁰

The debate over the SS-9's true nature—MRV or MIRV—was never completely resolved until the Soviets began testing a new generation of ICBMs in the early 1970s. These new systems, the SS-17, -18, and -19, were indisputably MIRVed weapons. Each of these systems differed from the SS-9 triplet. Without ever conceding that CIA's FMSAC analysis was correct in its original judgment, DIA and DDR&E, which had so strenuously argued that the SS-9 was a MIRV, quietly backed away from this position.⁴¹

The fifth round of SALT talks in Helsinki ended on Friday, 24 September 1971, with agreement on modernizing the "hot line" and on resuming the talks in Vienna in November. The following week the Senate approved building a US ABM system called Safeguard.

³⁹ C.E. Duckett Memo to DCI R.M. Helms, subject "Some Basic Judgments on SALT," 6 Apr 70, from Duckett's Chrono File.

⁴⁰ C.E. Duckett Memorandum for Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, titled "SS-9 MRV Separation Times," 25 Aug 70; Duckett Chrono File.

⁴¹ Brandwein 8 Apr 87 interview.

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Early in February 1972, Carl Duckett suffered a heart attack. He spent nearly six weeks recuperating. By the end of March, he had more or less resumed a full schedule.⁴² The pace of Verification Panel work quickened in preparation for President Nixon's trip to Moscow.

Agreements Signed

On 25 May 1972, Duckett was invited to the White House Cabinet Room to attend a ceremony marking the signing in Moscow by President Nixon and Soviet Party leader Leonid Brezhnev of a "Declaration on Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" that limited the deployment of anti-ballistic missiles and an "Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms" later referred to as SALT-I.⁴³ The signing ceremony actually took place on 26 May.⁴⁴ That same day Defense Secretary Laird announced the cancellation of the Safeguard ABM program.

Negotiations for a second SALT agreement were difficult, and there was no prospect for a treaty by the time Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev visited Washington in June 1973. Instead of a treaty, the most that could be accomplished was for President Nixon and Mr. Brezhnev to sign a declaration of principles for accelerating the SALT efforts. The significance of the document, known formally as the "American-Soviet Basic Principles of Negotiations on the Further Limitations of Strategic Offensive Arms," was that it mentioned "national technical means" of verification rather than on-site inspection. DCI-designate William Colby and Carl Duckett were present for the signing which took place in the East Room of the White House on Thursday afternoon, 21 June 1973. After the formal ceremony, Duckett followed Colby through the reception line. When he reached the President and Brezhnev, the interpreter told the Soviet leader that Duckett headed CIA's science and technology directorate. Brezhnev grabbed Duckett by the shoulder and said: "I don't know if I should be talking with you, but I met your new boss, so I guess it's okay."⁴⁵

This article is classified SECRET.

⁴² Duckett desk calendar.

⁴³ Duckett desk calendar.

⁴⁴ Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, pp. 254-258.

⁴⁵ Duckett interview and appointment calendar.